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- 2019

NEW Information

EMPLOYER'S HANDBOOK



Ontario

Ministry of
Skills Development
Alvin Curling
Minister

Ontario Ministry of Skills Development

FUTURES

EMPLOYERS' INFORMATION

As a good employer you have the opportunity to use your years of successful experience in business to help train young people to become skilled members of your work force.

The Training Program of the Ontario Ministry of Skills Development for the employment of disadvantaged young people who are out of school, out of work and over 15, is called FUTURES because the future is what business and industry deal with.

The Ontario government will match young people to your business needs and pay them while you train them. The example of your success and experience is vital in helping young people develop the skills they need to find, get and keep a job.

The following pages provide the answers to many of the questions employers have asked us.

If you have questions which are not dealt with in this handbook please call the toll free **YOUTH HOTLINE — 1-800-387-0777**.



DESCRIPTION OF ELEMENTS

1) **What is the purpose of the program?**

FUTURES is a program designed to give Ontario's youth work experience and skills training to make them more employable. It will teach them to locate, obtain and hold jobs on their own.

2) **Is FUTURES a provincial or federal program?**

FUTURES is a provincial program administered by the Youth Employment Services Branch of the Ontario Ministry of Skills Development. It is delivered by **FUTURES** offices in Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology and in Youth Employment Counselling Centres.

3) **What do you mean by employment disadvantaged?**

Employment disadvantaged applies to those young people with the least skills who face a variety of employment barriers such as less than Grade 12 education, little or no work experience, physical or mental disabilities, and/or trouble with the law. These disadvantages make it difficult for them to find and/or maintain permanent employment.

4) **What is the Pre-employment Preparation Option?**

Some **FUTURES** participants receive intensive assistance prior to a work placement. Pre-employment preparation is that component of **FUTURES** that takes participants through a series of life skills and academic activities prior to work placement, to prepare them for work and increase their likelihood of being successful on the job.

5) **What is the One-year Guarantee Option?**

The one-year guarantee option applies to youth, not employers.

Under the guarantee option, the participant is guaranteed 52 weeks of employment, with a maximum of 16 weeks with any one employer. Participants must make a commitment to undertake at least 3 hours of educational upgrading per week on their own time.

6) **What is the Part-time/Part-time Option?**

The Part-time work/Part-time school option allows the youth to work half a day (up to a maximum of 20 hours a week) and attend school for the other half day. Participants must make a commitment to undertake at least 8-10 hours of educational upgrading per week and complete a minimum of 3 high school credits during the 52 weeks. A participant may work with one employer for the full year or with two employers for 26 weeks each.

7) **What is the Enhanced Training Option?**

Normally an employer may have a participant for up to 16 weeks in a **FUTURES** placement. However, upon completion of the first eight weeks of training, according to the original training plan, the **FUTURES** placement staff, the employer or the participant may propose an enhanced training extension to the existing agreement.

Based on an assessment of the success of the placement during the first 8 weeks by the **FUTURES** placement staff, and if all parties agree to the extension, the employer will complete, with the assistance of **FUTURES** staff, a new training plan which will be attached to the amended Employer Training/Client Placement Agreement. There will be an extension of the training period of up to 10 additional weeks bringing the total maximum training time to 26 weeks.

Employers must provide a combination of on-the-job and related off-site formal training during paid working hours under this option. The formal training will be for a minimum of 20 hours and will generally not exceed 4 weeks and it cannot include academic upgrading.

8) **What happens to someone who breaks the commitment to upgrading during the Guarantee or Part-time Work/Part-time School Option? Does the participant finish the placement?**

To receive the Part-time Work/Part-time School or One-year Guarantee, a participant must continue the educational upgrading. Failure to live up to this commitment disqualifies the individual from these options.

Employers will be given one week's notification of such termination from the Part-time Work/Part-time School Option.

Under the Guarantee Option, the participant is able to complete the existing placement.

9) **Are participants paid to attend mandatory career workshops?**

Workshops held prior to work experience placements do not involve payment to participants. For some participants, additional Job Maintenance workshops may be deemed necessary to facilitate their success on the job. These shorter duration workshops may require the co-operation of the employer to release the participant(s) during working hours and would involve payment of wages to the participant during attendance.

10) **Why do I have to wait until they go through a workshop?**

The **FUTURES** office determines when the **FUTURES** participant is ready for a work placement. The workshop benefits participants and prospective employers because it increases the likelihood of a successful placement and assists participants in making the transition to permanent employment. In most cases it will include training in job safety which will benefit all parties.

WAGES AND OTHER EMPLOYMENT-RELATED COVERAGE

11) Who pays the participant?

FUTURES pays the participant and deals with the applicable benefits and aspects of the Workers' Compensation Act.

12) Is the employer responsible for a portion of the participant's salary?

No. **FUTURES** pays it all. The employer is responsible for covering the cost of the off-site formal training under the Enhanced Training Option.

13) How many hours constitute a regular work day?

An employee should not work more than 8 hours a day. Any employer wishing a participant to work more than 8 hours a day may extend the hours, providing the participant agrees and that the number of hours worked in a week does not exceed 44.

In the Part-time Work/Part-time School Option, the maximum per week is 20 hours. Some flexibility of scheduling may be required to accommodate the timing of school programs.

14) May the employer supplement the participant's salary or have the participant work overtime?

The participant may work up to 44 hours a week, (or 20 hours a week on the Part-time Work/Part-time School Option). The employer may not increase the trainee's wage or offer overtime payments.

15) Why won't you allow me to "top-up" wages?

The minimum wage (\$4.55 per hour, effective October 1, 1987) is set as the program-wide standard of wage rate to ensure equality among all **FUTURES** participants on work placement. As an alternative to "topping up" wages, employers are encouraged to place participants on their own payroll as soon as possible.

16) May the employee be paid by the employer for working on a statutory holiday?

No. The employer cannot pay for work on statutory holidays. All **FUTURES** participants must be given the statutory holidays or compensating time off if they are required to work.

17) May the participant work rotating shifts?

Yes. This is possible but the training plan must designate the hours as far in advance as possible.

- 18) **How long should my participant get for lunch? Is the lunch period part of the work hours?**

The lunch break should be consistent with that of other employees working with the participant. That practice should be covered in the training plan.

- 19) **How do I benefit from this program? I realize I don't have to pay the participant but do I have to spend time and money on training?**

You have the opportunity to train an individual for permanent employment in your business without having to pay wages. The participant is gaining the skills necessary to make a fuller and more productive contribution to your business. You will have also gained a chance to elevate the participant's skills, attitudes and potential with no cash outlay of your own. You are encouraged to place the participant on your payroll as soon as possible. Specialized training costs are not covered by the program. Under the Enhanced Training Option the employer must pay the cost of the off-site formal training.

- 20) **Are participants paid to attend school or formal training under the Part-time Work/Part-time School and the Enhanced Training Option respectively?**

Under the Part-time Work/Part-time School Option participants will receive a training stipend of \$100 per week for time spent upgrading and study/preparation as well as the minimum wage for Part-time work hours.

Under the Enhanced Training Option participants will be paid the provincial minimum wage for both on-the-job and off-site training.

If the off-site formal training cannot be arranged during paid working hours, then the on-the-job hours must be reduced accordingly. Costs for such instruction must be paid by the employer.

- 21) **If the participant works overtime, does Workers' Compensation coverage apply?**

FUTURES participants may not work overtime. Workers' Compensation provides coverage for the participant up to 44 hours per week.

- 22) **Who is responsible for OHIP coverage?**

FUTURES participants are responsible for their own OHIP coverage. The employer is not required to contribute.

23) **How long can I have a placement?**

FUTURES is designed to give young people the training and experience they need to become employable.

- (a) Records show that placements of up to 16 weeks have been effective in giving young people the experience they need to obtain permanent employment. Many young people will be ready for permanent employment in less time.
- (b) Under the Enhanced Training Option, placements may be extended up to 26 weeks. Following completion of the eighth week of a regular placement, the placement staff, the employer and the participant may agree to expand the current training plan to include formal on-the-job and off-site training for an additional 18 weeks.
- (c) Under the Part-time Work/Part-time School Option participants will be guaranteed part-time work placements of one year if they agree to undertake concurrent part-time study and complete at least 3 credits toward their secondary school diploma. As an alternative, participants may also have two consecutive part-time work placements of 26 weeks in duration with two employers.

24) **What is liability insurance?**

Liability insurance protects business owners and their employees and participants against negligence claims arising from the general public as a result of personal injury and/or property damage.

25) **Will special liability insurance be required and will this insurance be expensive?**

Yes, third party liability insurance is necessary to enter into the Employer Training/Client Placement Agreement. However, it will require only a discussion with your insurance agent/broker to have the participant covered under your existing liability coverage. This should be available at minimal or no cost.

26) **What are my responsibilities if a participant is injured on the job?**

You are required to inform the **FUTURES** office immediately of any accident or injury to the participant while on the job in order to comply with Section 121 of the Workers' Compensation Act.

27) **By whom is the participant employed?**

The participant works for you. He or she is a part of your work force; under your supervision, training, and discipline. However, for financial and administrative purposes the participant is listed as being employed by **FUTURES** for the purposes of salary, benefits, Workers' Compensation and deductions from source such as U.I.C. and C.P.P.

HIRING OF PARTICIPANTS

28) How long will it take to arrange for a work placement?

There is no set time. Naturally, the **FUTURES** office wants the young person to start a work placement as soon as possible. However, it is important to remember that each prospective participant undergoes an assessment to determine job readiness and may be required to attend a workshop before being placed with an employer, both of which take time. In the end, the employer benefits by receiving a participant who is ready and able to work.

29) May I choose my own participant or do my own recruiting?

The **FUTURES** office will send prospective participants for an interview with the employer. The employer may choose which of the potential participants he/she would like to employ/train. If the employer has an individual in mind, the participant's eligibility for the program and suitability for the placement must be assessed by the **FUTURES** office. An employer is not permitted to advertise positions available on the **FUTURES** program.

30) What kind of participant am I going to get on this program?

A young person who is willing and ready to work and learn. Some may be high school graduates; some may not be. The employer has the opportunity to interview each participant before accepting the individual into the work placement.

31) How many FUTURES participants am I allowed to have at any one time?

There is no set number. However, each **FUTURES** participant must have an individual training plan and have at least a good possibility of full-time employment after the work placement period. To ensure adequate supervision and a supportive work employment, some limits may be necessary.

32) May I start a participant before getting FUTURES office approval?

No. If you are in search of someone to train on **FUTURES**, you must wait until the training plan has been approved by the **FUTURES** office.

33) Do family members qualify for support under FUTURES?

No. Immediate family members cannot qualify for work placement in a relative's business.

34) I have a full-time employee working for me now. May I put that person on FUTURES?

No. This young person is already working and therefore would not qualify for **FUTURES** since participants have to be out of work for at least 12 weeks (20 weeks in the case of high school graduates) to be eligible.

35) **Can I get a participant on FUTURES for an apprenticeship position?**

Yes. The **FUTURES** office will make arrangements with the local Ministry of Skills Development Apprenticeship Field Office.

Under the Enhanced Training Option, placements may not involve apprenticeship training where regulations require payment of wages in excess of provincial minimum wage. Where pre-apprenticeship training placements have been approved, such placements may not be extended under this option.

36) **I know a person, who has worked for me in the past, whom I would like to have as a FUTURES participant. Can I employ this person now on the FUTURES program?**

Refer the individual to a **FUTURES** office. If the individual in turn qualifies for **FUTURES** and is prepared to go on work placement, and if the training plan is appropriate, the individual may well find the work placement in your employ the most suitable. Remember, once on **FUTURES**, the participant may choose to do the work placement with another employer, or you as an employer may find someone more suitable for your business. Although you referred the individual to **FUTURES** neither you nor that individual is obliged to enter into a contract of service.

37) **Can I hire a participant for a Part-time position?**

Yes. Part-time placements (less than 24 hours per week) are available through **FUTURES** when they are in the interest of the participant.

The Part-time Work/Part-time School Option is intended for those participants who lack a secondary school graduation diploma and who have been out of school for at least 12 months. Those participants under the age of 19 must attend an interview with the guidance counsellor of the participating high school and receive the permission of the school principal in order to be admitted.

These placements may not exceed 20 hours per week. Participants cannot be placed with a Board of Education.

38) **Is there a limit to the number of participants a company can have in one year?**

The number of participants per company is a local decision made by the **FUTURES** counsellor after considering the work/training setting and the amount of supervision available.

39) **Can I hire the participant now and do the paperwork later?**

No. The work placement can only commence after all the appropriate procedures have been completed. An employer cannot hire a young person and attempt, retroactively, to have that employee qualify for **FUTURES**.

40) **May an employer request a person of a certain age or sex?**

No.

41) **Can I get another participant once I have trained the first one?**

Yes, providing that the first participant has been kept on full-time or that the **FUTURES** office is satisfied that the first participant did not prove a satisfactory employee at the end of the subsidy period and/or that the participant is acquiring valuable and marketable job skills.

42) **Will the participant be at work every day?**

Yes. The hours are set out in the training plan and it is intended that the participant will conform to those hours.

The Enhanced Training Option requires either the modification to, or preparation of a new training plan to include more formal training.

This will consist of both on-the-job and related off-site formal training during paid working hours to build on the skill development achieved in the first eight weeks, and to provide significantly enhanced skill-building and subsequent enhanced employability for the participant. The formal training will be for a minimum of 20 hours, will generally not exceed 4 weeks, and will not include academic upgrading.

43) **What training is acceptable?**

The training plan must satisfy the **FUTURES** goal of providing useful and meaningful work experience that will enhance the employability of the participants.

44) **What should I do if the FUTURES program does not have a participant that can fill my requirements?**

Be patient. The availability of an appropriate match between participants and training opportunities will determine how quickly the position can be filled. It may take some time to make the right match.

45) **Will the FUTURES office send a representative to my place of business rather than my going to the FUTURES office?**

This may be possible. The employer should make such arrangements with the local **FUTURES** office. In most instances many of the necessary arrangements can be made by telephone or mail. It is rarely necessary for an employer to visit a **FUTURES** office.

TRAINING RELATED INQUIRIES

- 46) **If a participant is not working out, must I keep the person for the full placement period as outlined in the training plan?**

If there are problems with the participant, the employer should contact the **FUTURES** office to discuss the situation and try to work out these problems. If no satisfactory solution can be found then the employment contract may be cancelled by the employer, participant or the **FUTURES** office with one week's notice.

- 47) **How much supervision is involved?**

The supervision must be sufficient to ensure that the skills and training level to be achieved during the work placement are accomplished.

- 48) **What is a training plan?**

The employer will complete a brief training-position specification for the placement from which a detailed training plan will be developed in consultation with the **FUTURES** office. It will include a description of the job to be performed, requirements for a person undertaking the position and general working conditions.

The employer will receive assistance from the **FUTURES** placement counsellor in the preparation and/or completion of the training plan. If a participant's placement is to be extended to 26 weeks under the Enhanced Training Option, the placement counsellor will meet with the employer to complete a more detailed training plan which includes formal off-site training.

- 49) **Can the participant's hours be more than first specified?**

Yes, if the maximum number of hours does not exceed 44 and if the change has been undertaken in consultation with the **FUTURES** office and the participant.

- 50) **Why does the training plan require so many details?**

The details assist the **FUTURES** office in making the best possible youth/ employer match. During the placement, the details provide the basis to evaluate the applicants progress and ensure that the required skills are being achieved.

- 51) **What are the employer's obligations with regard to the training plan?**

The employer must fulfill all commitments outlined in the training plan and must report to the **FUTURES** office if any responsibilities cannot be fulfilled.

- 52) **Why is it necessary to emphasize training? Why can't I just give a person a job to do? Why is supervision necessary?**

Training and supervision of a participant by experienced and knowledgeable employers is the best way to give inexperienced workers the opportunity to upgrade their skills and make themselves more valuable. This gives the young person the best chance to find and keep permanent, productive work.

- 53) **What mechanisms are built into FUTURES to prevent an employer from abusing the program particularly in relation to the use of free labour?**

The training plan and regular contact with the **FUTURES** office during work placement help ensure that useful skills are being learned by the participants. Close monitoring by **FUTURES** staff will help ensure that the on-the-job experience is successful in helping young people secure full-time employment after they complete their **FUTURES** placement.

- 54) **Do employers have to provide one-to-one supervision?**

The level of supervision will depend on the nature of the skills being taught.

- 55) **What is the procedure following completion of the written training plan?**

The training plan and application must be submitted to, and approved by, the **FUTURES** office before potential candidates for the position can be referred to you.

EMPLOYER QUALIFICATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 56) **How do I qualify for this program?**

First complete an application and training plan form available from a **FUTURES** office. By demonstrating your ability to provide useful work experience and by accepting responsibilities in training the participant, you should qualify.

- 57) **Do I have to supply safety equipment?**

Yes.

- 58) **Is the employer expected to hire the participant after the work placement ends? Does the employer have to guarantee this in advance?**

Employers who indicate that there is a strong likelihood of full-time employment after the work placement generally have priority over those employers who can offer no likelihood of further employment. Actual employment would be conditional on satisfactory performance by the participant. If the participant is being appropriately supervised, suitability for hiring should be evident well before the end of the work placement.

59) **Can I refer a participant for a position within my organization?**

Definitely! If there is a full-time position within your organization that the **FUTURES** participant may qualify for during a work placement, the participant may apply.

60) **If I cannot hire the participant after training, but find another employer who will, is this considered a successful FUTURES program?**

Yes. If the training will lead to full-time employment, in a business other than the work placement business.

Details of such an arrangement should appear in the employer application/training plan in support of the request for **FUTURES** placement.

61) **After placing the FUTURES client at my workplace, will I ever see a FUTURES representative again?**

Yes. At the time of placement the times and points of consultation and monitoring of the work placement will be established. If you need the assistance of the **FUTURES** office during the work placement, you are encouraged to call.

62) **Can I advertise or place a job order with my local Canada Employment Centre?**

No. An employer cannot advertise **FUTURES** or an available **FUTURES** placement position. Only the Ministry of Skills Development or a local **FUTURES** office may do so.

63) **What paperwork and record keeping is involved on my part as the employer?**

The employer is responsible for keeping an accurate attendance record of the participant including the days and hours worked as well as informing the **FUTURES** office of the participant's hours as requested. A monitoring form is submitted on a regular basis.

64) **When do I have to submit the Time Records?**

Time Records **MUST** be submitted at the request of the **FUTURES** office. This is usually done every two weeks.

65) **What types of positions does FUTURES fill? Does FUTURES place participants in commission sales or telephone soliciting?**

FUTURES involves the placement of participants in appropriate training situations. Commission sales and telephone soliciting are not considered appropriate training opportunities.

- 66) **What happens if my business slows down and I can't provide the work and training I had originally believed I could?**

You should consult the **FUTURES** office so that an alternative placement for the participant can be arranged.

- 67) **Does seasonal work qualify?**

Yes. However, priority will be given to employers who are more likely to provide permanent employment to the participant at the end of the subsidy period.

- 68) **What types of businesses can use the program? Do we have to have been in business for a certain length of time to qualify?**

All Ontario employers may apply. You do not have to have been in operation for any particular length of time. However, you must demonstrate sufficient stability to provide an adequate training opportunity.

Under the Part-time Work/Part-time School Option, participants may not be placed with Boards of Education.

- 69) **Can I have a FUTURES placement as well as a Job Development (Federal) placement?**

Yes, (but of course not in the same position.)

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